

# Pollinator Habitat at Home

**Want to improve pollinator habitat around your home? Plant a pollinator garden!**

## Pollinator Garden Elements:

**Provide a pollen and nectar source.** Plant a variety of flowering plants (including shrubs and trees) so that something is in bloom from earliest spring to late into the fall. This means you are feeding pollinators when they are active and reproducing. Use as many native plants as possible, although there are a lot of horticultural plants that pollinators really like, too. There are a lot of great online resources to help you figure out what plants to use, or contact your local chapter of the Master Gardeners.

**Provide a water source.** This can be as simple as keeping a squishy area of your yard moist, or as elaborate as a koi pond.

**Plant in a sunny area that is protected from wind.** Trees and shrubs around the edges of your opening can help with this.

**Provide shelter.** Trees and shrubs not only provide a wind break, pollen and nectar, they also provide shelter from the elements and protection from predators.

**Provide nesting sites.** Many pollinators use hollow stems or twigs for nests and overwintering sites. Bamboo, elderberry, and dead Himalayan blackberry stems are used for nesting sites for leafcutter and mason bees. A pile of branches or rocks may be used by some butterflies for overwintering. Some bees nest in the ground, so bare patches of soil in a sunny location are important for them.

**Use pesticides only as an absolute last resort,** especially neonicotinoids. For a list of commonly sold neonicotinoid insecticides, go to <http://www.xerces.org/neonicotinoids-and-bees/> Also try to avoid buying plants that have been treated with neonicotinoid insecticides.

Some websites that have some great information about pollinators and how you can help them include:

<http://www.xerces.org/>

<http://www.fs.fed.us/wildflowers/pollinators/index.shtml>

<http://millionpollinatorgardens.org/>

